

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

BRIAN SCHWEITZER
GOVERNOR



JOHN BOHLINGER
LT. GOVERNOR

August 6, 2008

Mr. Chuck Connor, Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
14th Street and Independence Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Connor:

I have received requests for a Natural Disaster Determination (NDD) by the US Secretary of Agriculture from the Daniels County Board of Commissioners, the Dawson County Board of Commissioners, the Fallon County Board of Commissioners, the Prairie County Board of Commissioners, the Roosevelt County Board of Commissioners, the Sheridan County Board of Commissioners, the Richland County Board of Commissioners, and the Wibaux County Board of Commissioners.

These counties all have received substantially below normal precipitation during the winter and spring months of 2008 and little to none in early summer. The continued drought conditions have negatively impacted this year's crops. Wibaux County, Richland County, Prairie County and Fallon County have not seen measurable precipitation in over a year. Dawson County is also seeing another long drought cycle. Daniels County has had numerous incidents of with significant hail damage. On July 20, 2008 Wibaux County experienced severe storms with damaging wind and hail and on June 26, 2008 a devastating hailstorm hit Sidney, MT in Richland County.

Agricultural producers in these counties are facing severe economic losses. Grazing lands and livestock water have been severely impacted. Both the local and the agricultural economy are threatened by the continuing drought. The lack of moisture has resulted in extremely dry fuel conditions and very low water supplies which are contributing to wild land fires and fire danger.

I am forwarding a copy of this letter to the State Farm Service Agency office so they may begin to compile the necessary damage assessment information.

Your prompt review and approval of this request will be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

BRIAN SCHWEITZER
Governor

cc: Lieutenant Governor John Bohlinger
Ron de Yong, Department of Agriculture
General Randall Mosley, Department of Military Affairs
Dave Maser, Disaster & Emergency Services
Randy Johnson, Farm Services Agency
Jesse Aber, Department of Natural Resource & Conservation
County Commissioners